

February 26, 2009

Committee on Public Health
General Assembly
State of Connecticut

Dear Committee Members:

I am writing to express my full support of Raised Bill No. 981: "An Act Concerning the Availability of Automatic External Defibrillators in Schools". Quite frankly, I perceive this bill as an absolutely vital step in insuring that we, as public health providers, are doing everything medically possible in the event of a cardiac emergency in the school setting. It has been well-demonstrated in countless clinical studies that emergent application of an external defibrillator in the setting of a malignant cardiac arrhythmia can be lifesaving through restoration of normal cardiac rhythm. But time is a factor. Chances for a successful cardioversion decrease with each passing minute. Hence it is vital to have the Automatic External Defibrillator (AED) ON SITE in the school to be applied immediately by trained personnel.

Having worked as an attending physician in an emergency department for many years, I have witnessed first hand on several occasions the miracle of a life restored, as provided by AED. And it is a relatively simple technology to learn to use and apply, especially in the portable AED format. In this day and age, taking into consideration modern medicolegal perspectives and moral obligations, I would dare to consider it negligent to not provide this vital tool in schools.

This bill is extraordinarily important and I implore you to enact it. Thank you very much for your consideration.

Respectfully,

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